

INTEGRAL INSERT MOLDED FIBER OPTIC TRANSCEIVER ELECTROMAGNETIC INTERFERENCE SHIELD

Matt K. Schwiebert

R. Sean Murphy

DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART

[0001] As communication bit rates and fiber optic transceiver densities in networking equipment increase, more EMI (electromagnetic interference) is radiated from the optical ports. Excessive EMI emission causes interference with other electronic equipment.

[0002] Low fiber optic transceiver cost is achieved by using injection molded plastic parts whenever possible. In addition to having low material and fabrication cost, injection molded plastic parts enable snap-fit assemblies, further decreasing the cost of the transceiver by eliminating fasteners and assembly labor. The disadvantages of injection molded plastic transceiver housings include relatively low mechanical strength and poor EMI performance (since the plastic is electromagnetically transparent, allowing EMI to escape from the transceiver module thru the bezel opening).

[0003] One prior art solution uses external sheet metal shields on fiber optic transceivers. However, only the perimeter is shielded and EMI is allowed to escape directly through the housing and the nose of the transceivers. Furthermore, this allows EMI to exit the port and couple to metal parts in fiber connectors.

[0004] Another prior art solution uses metal housings on fiber optic transceivers. Metal housings are more costly than plastic housings, and often require fasteners to assemble because snap-together features are difficult to design in metal. These fasteners add additional material and labor cost.

[0005] Another prior art solution uses metal doors to enclose networking equipment. However, metal doors add to the overall cost of the equipment, inhibit access for service, and hamper fiber routing.

[0006] Another prior art solution uses internal sheet-metal shields, which are inserted through the cross-section of the plastic fiber optic transceiver housing. However, this requires

perforation of the housing resulting in a dramatically reduced housing cross-section where the shield is inserted. The reduced cross-section decreases the strength of the housing under bending, resulting in breakage of the housing when fiber optic connector is subject to side loading (i.e., forces applied to the fiber acting perpendicular to the long axis of the transceiver).

[0007] Another prior art solution uses metalized plastic fiber optic transceiver housing. However, metallization is expensive and may flake off and contaminate the optics in the transceiver.

[0008] Thus, what is needed is an optic fiber transceiver module that solves the problem of the triple-tradeoff between mechanical strength, cost, and EMI shielding performance.

SUMMARY

[0009] In one embodiment of the invention, a fiber optic module includes a first housing insert molded with an electromagnetic interference (EMI) shield, an optoelectronic subassembly mounted in the first housing, and a second housing mounted to the first housing to enclose the optoelectronic subassembly. The EMI shield includes a conductive mesh and conductive fingers. The first housing includes a non-conductive housing floor, non-conductive housing sidewalls, and a non-conductive nose defining at least one connector receptacle, wherein the housing floor and the housing sidewalls are injection molded through the mesh of the electrically conductive EMI shield to be integral with the nose and so that the fingers at least partially surround the nose to make contact with ground.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] Fig. 1 illustrates a fiber optic module in one embodiment of the invention.

[0011] Fig. 2 illustrates an electromagnetic interference (EMI) shield in one embodiment of the invention.

[0012] Figs. 3 and 4 illustrate two views of a lower housing of the fiber optic module of Fig. 1 in one embodiment of the invention.

[0013] Fig. 5 illustrates an optoelectronic subassembly mounted in the lower housing of Figs. 3 and 4 in one embodiment of the invention.

[0014] Use of the same reference numbers in different figures indicates similar or identical elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0015] Fig. 1 illustrates a fiber optic module 10 in one embodiment of the invention. Fiber optic module 10 can be a transmitter, a receiver, or a transceiver of any form factor, such as a SFF (Small Form-Factor), SFP (Small Form-factor Pluggable), GBIC (Gigabit Interface Converter), 1×9, or MTRJ (Multifiber in the Telecom RJ form factor) transceiver. Fiber optic module 10 includes a lower housing 12 insert molded with an electromagnetic interference (EMI) shield 14, and an upper housing 16 mounted atop lower housing 12 secured by cantilever hooks 84.

[0016] Fig. 2 illustrates EMI shield 14 separate from lower housing 12 in one embodiment of the invention. EMI shield 14 includes an electrically conductive mesh 22, electrically conductive shield sidewalls 24 around mesh 22, and electrically conductive contact fingers 26 (not all labeled) extending from shield sidewalls 24. Mesh 22 has small perforations that shield EMI over the frequency range of interest from escaping through a nose 54 (Fig. 3) of fiber optic module 10. Mesh 22 further defines openings 28 for receiving fiber optic connectors from a fiber optic cable. Contact fingers 26 also shield EMI from escaping around fiber optic module 10 when it is mounted to a bezel of a host device. Contact fingers 26 also provide frequent physical contact to the bezel opening thru which the module is inserted. Typically EMI shield 14 is grounded through this physical contact with the bezel of the host device, which is grounded. EMI shield 14 can be stamped or etched from a sheet metal and then folded into its final shape with well known sheet metal fabrication techniques. In one embodiment, the sidewalls ensure that the contact fingers are in the correct position (along the long axis of the module) to interface to the bezel opening where they contact chassis ground. In other embodiments, shield sidewalls 24 are not necessary if the bezel happens to be in the same plane as the insert-molded conductive mesh 22 so there is already physical contact between EMI shield 14 and the chassis ground.

[0017] Figs. 3 and 4 illustrate the details of lower housing 12 insert molded with EMI shield 14 in one embodiment of the invention. A housing floor 32 has vents 34 and pin openings 36. Vents 34 allow air flow through module 10 after assembly to provide ventilation during use. Pin openings 36 provide access for electrical connection to a host circuit board in a host

device. Sidewalls 38 and 40 both include shoulders 42 for engaging cantilever hooks 84 (only one is visible) from upper housing 16. A back wall 44 includes a cantilever hook 46 for engaging the top surface of upper housing 16. A fiduciary 48 includes two U-shaped cutouts 50 for engaging an optoelectronic subassembly 60 (described later in Fig. 5). Mounting pins 52 (only one is visible) are provided to mount module 10 to a host circuit board in a host device. A nose 54 having two connector receptacles 56 for receiving a fiber optic connector. Nose 54 can be any connector form factor, including SC, LC, and MTRJ form factors.

[0018] Lower housing 12 is injection molded through mesh 22 of EMI shield 14. For example, a mold of lower housing 12 is loaded with EMI shield 14 and a thermoplastic material is injected into the mold. The thermoplastic material flows through the perforations of mesh 40 and forms in a high-strength monolithic lower housing 12. Specifically, housing floor 32, sidewalls 38 and 40, and fiduciary 48 are injection molded through mesh 22 to be integral with nose 54 while shield sidewalls 24 and contact fingers 26 at least partially surround nose 54.

[0019] Fig. 5 illustrates optoelectronic subassembly 60 mounted in lower housing 12 in one embodiment of the invention. Optoelectronic subassembly 60 includes a printed circuit board (PCB) 62, an optical transmitter subassembly 64 (e.g., a light source such as a vertical cavity surface emitting laser) mounted on PCB 62, and a first connector interface (or transmitter port) 66 mounted to transmitter subassembly 64. Optoelectronic subassembly 60 may further include an optical receiver subassembly 68 (e.g., a photo detector such as a photodiode) mounted on PCB 62, and a receiver connector interface (or receiver port) 70 mounted to receiver subassembly 68. Each connector interface includes circumferential slots 72 on their outer surface that fit into U-shaped cutouts 50 (Fig. 3). Once seated in lower housing 12, the ports of connector interface 66 and 70 are aligned with and pass through openings 28 (Fig. 2) of mesh 22 to receive fiber optic connectors from a fiber optic cable. Connector interface 66 and 70 can be any connector form factor, including SC, LC, and MTRJ form factors. When mounted inside lower housing 12, pins 74 (only one is labeled) of PCB 62 protrudes through pin holes 36 (Fig. 4) for making electrical contact with a host circuit board.

[0020] Referring back to Fig. 1, upper housing 16 is snap-fitted onto lower housing 12 to enclose optoelectronic subassembly 30. Upper housing 16 includes vents 82 and cantilever hooks 84 (only one is visible).

[0021] Various other adaptations and combinations of features of the embodiments disclosed are within the scope of the invention. Numerous embodiments are encompassed by the following claims.